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# OF SVPERSTITION.

Περφῆται δύο ἢ τρεῖς λαλείτωσαν, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν.

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# OF SUPERSTITION.

SUPERSTITION being a crime so ordinarily charged on those whose Consciences assure them that they are faire enough from the guilt of it, it will be an Act of double charity, first to the honest calumniated Protestant, Secondly to the contumelious unjust defamer of his best actions, to consider a while of this matter, and first to enquire what is the naturall importance of the word in Latine and Greeke, especially as we finde it in the New-Testament. § 1.

Superstition in Latine is most clearely according to the use and Originarion of the word, *Superstitum Cultus*, *The worship of some departed from this World, supposed yet to have life in another*. This is observed and acknowledged amongst many others by *Lactantius*, and made probable even by the different conceipt of *Cicero*, who deduceth the word from the practice of those that used to pray whole daies together, *ut sibi liberi superstites essent, that their children might outlive themselves*; by that acknowledging the truth of the Etymologie from the word [*Superstites*] but disguising it into a ridiculous phansy, *out of feare*, saith S^t. *Austin, to condemn the practice of the Romans, among whom he lived*. These *Superstites*, whom § 2. § 3.

the Heathens thus worſhipped, were by them called *Heroës*, men of worth and excellency ἀποθεωθέντες, *aſſumed into the ſtate of Gods*, but among Chriſtians the *Soules* of the *Saints* departed, *quæ ſuperſunt corporibus*; which when *their bodies are buried in peace*, are imagined *to live for evermore*. And the worſhipping of theſe (as among the Papiſts 'tis moſt ordinary) is moſt properly called *Superſtition*. And in that ſence I conceive it is, that in ſome authentique writings of our Church, the *Idolatrie* and *Superſtition* of the Papiſts is cenſured; by *Idolatrie* meaning the worſhippe of *Images* among them, and by *Superſtition* the worſhippe and prayers to Saints departed. A cenſure authorizable by that part of S. *Auſtin*'s words, *De Doct. Chriſti. l. 2. Superſtitioſum eſt quicquid inſtitutum eſt ad colendum, ſicut Deum, Creaturam, partemve ullam creaturæ. Superſtition is the worſhipping a Creature as God, or any part of a Creature.* By the latter of which I know not what he ſhould meane ſo probably, as thoſe ſuppoſedly deified *parts of* Creatures, the ſoules of dead-men.

§ 4. The Greeke word parallel to this is δεισιδαιμονία, which
*De ver. Relig.* literally is, as S. *Auſtin* defines the Latine *Superſtition*, *Dæmonum Cultus*, the *worſhip of Dæmones*.

§ 5. The full importance of which muſt be taken, 1 from the various uſe of the word Δαίμων. 2 of the other word [Δείδω] ingredient in the compoſition.

§ 6. Δαίμων Signifies ſometimes in a wider ſence a *God*, as generally among the Poets, *Juno* and *Apollo* and *Minerva*, and all beſide the ſupreme *Jupiter*, are numbred among *Homer*'s Δαίμονες. This *Maximus Tyrius* demonſtrates at large, and adds πολλὴν ἴσην δαιμόνων ἀγέλην ἔχει, that there are a great flock of thoſe δαίμονες. Somtimes 2. in a ſtricter ſence the Angels, as 'tis uſed among the Philoſophers, eſpecially the Pythagoreans & Platonicks; for ſo the deſcription of them in *Hierocles*, & *Maximus Tyrius*, & *Plotinus*, & *Proclus* will evidence, particularly that every man's proper *tutelary Angel* the συνὼν or οἰκεῖος or ἐιλεχὼς ἡμᾶς δαίμων, as *Plotinus* calls him. The cohabitant or domeſtick Dæmon or Angel that is allotted us.

§ 7. A thing ſo frequent among thoſe Philoſophers, that the word

word φιλοσοφία, *Philoſophy*, *Col.* 2. 8. ſeemes to me to be directly all one with θρησκία τῶν ἀγγέλων; *worſhipping of Angels* v. 18. And ſo thoſe two exhortations in thoſe two verſes to be coincident, καταβραβεύειν in one (which we render *receiving of reward*) being æquipollent to συλαγωγεῖν, *ſpoyling* in the other, only in diverſe notions. The firſt referring to *prizes* in the Olympick games, the other to ſpoyles in warre. the reaſons of which conjecture it will not be ſeaſonable here to inſert.

§ 8. And thirdly againe the *departed worthies*, which (beſides the frequency of that acception among the Philoſophers) may ſeeme to bee meant *Apoc.* 9. 20. where the δαιμόνια, which are ſaid to be worſhip't, are joyn'd with *Idols of Gold, &c.* and communicate with them in their effects and liveleſneſſe, that they *neither ſee, nor heare, nor walke.*

§ 9. To theſe ſences might be added that other moſt vulgar for *evill ſpirits*, agreeable to which, is that definition of δεισιδαιμόνια, in the *Etymologicum magnum*, that 'tis ἡ πρὸς τὰς πονηρὰς δαίμονας ἐπιμέλεια καὶ φόβος, a care & feare of evill ſpirits. And a fifth leſſe frequent, yet to be found among the Philoſophers, for *wiſe men* here in this life, which *Hierocles* deſcribes at large under the Title of καλαχθόνιοι δαίμονες earthly ſpirits, or Dæmons.

§ 10. Now the word δεισιδαιμονία refers indifferently to the three firſt of theſe, and ſignifies the *worſhipping* either of the many *Poëticall Gods*, or *Angels*, or *Dead-men*, or indeed any thing but the one ſupreme God. Thus is it ſaid of the Gentiles, 1 *Cor.* 10. 20. *That what they Sacrifice, they Sacrifice* δαιμονίοις, and not to God. *i. e.* not to the one true God. And in the booke of *Baruch* 4. 7. *Offering* δαιμονίοις, and *not to God.* where (as alſo in many other places of holy writ) 'tis not proper to render it [*Devils or Infernall Spirits*] but (with Mr. *Mead*) *Damons*, meaning thereby either *Angels* or *Dead men*, or any thing elſe beſide the true God. Which ſeemes to be expreſs't *Rom.* 25. by worſhipping the Creature παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα, *beſides* (not as we render *more then*) *the Creator.*

§ 11. Thus when S. *Paul* tells the *Athenians Acts* 17. 22. καθ' πάντα ὡς δεισιδαιμονεστέρους ὑμᾶς θεωρῶ, *I consider and behold you in all things* (or in all that I see of you) as men that are *more superstitious then any other*. Hee meanes they worshipt more *Gods* or *Demons* then the Romans, or any other sort of Heathen people; or were more devout, more pious in the Heathen worshipps then any others; for so it followes εὐσεβεῖτε, *v.* 23. *Yee worship*: and so indeede 'tis generally attested by the Greek writers[a] *Pausanias*, *Philostratus*, *Strabo*, *Max. Tyr.* &c. That the *Athenians* were more religious then other people, at least were more hospitable to new and strange Deities, then the Romans, who (saith *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*) were so averse from all forreigne Deities (unlesse some few that their ancestors had from the Grecians) that they might bee more truely said μισοξενεῖν περὶ τὰς θεὰς ἢ φιλοξενεῖν to bee haters of such kinde of hospitalitie or admission of forreign Gods, then lovers of it.

a *Pausan. in Atticis* c. 15 εἰς θεὰς εὐσεβεῖν ἄλλων πλέον, & Ἀθηναίους περιωσότερον, ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις εἰς τὰ θεῖα ὅτι σπουδῆς p. 22. *Philostratus of Apollonius l.* 4. c. 6. φιλοθύτας τὰς Ἀθηναίους ἔδεν. & *Strab.* Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ ἅσπερ περὶ τὰ ἄλλα φιλοξενοῦντες διατελοῦσιν ὅτω καὶ περὶ τὰς θεὰς, πολλὰ γὰρ τῶν ξενικῶν ἱερῶν παρεδέξαντο &c. *Max. Tyr.* διαλ. λθ. ὁ Ἀθηναίων δῆμος ἕτερα καινὰ δαιμόνια ἐπεισφέρων. *Strom. p.* 377.

So *Acts* 25. 19. *Festus* or Saint *Luke* in his story saith, That the *Jewes* had certaine ζητήματα, *Questions*, or Accusations against *Paul* περὶ τῆς ἰδίας δεισιδαιμονίας, *concerning his owne Religion*, or Superstition, or worship, peculiar to him from them, and (as it followes to explaine what they meant by the word) περὶ τινὸς Ἰησοῦ τεθνηκότος, *Of one Jesus that was dead*, puting him under the vulgar notion of a δαίμων or *dead Heros*, and so meaning the worship of him by δεισιδαιμονία.

§ 12. Beside this method of examining the sence of this word, another I mentioned by observing the force of the word δείδω, the former part in its composition, which though it signifies simply *to feare*, (and therefore the word is rendred by *Hesychius* φοβοθεία, *fearing God*, or *Religion* in generall; by others φόβος θεῶν καὶ δαιμόνων, *The feare of God & Demons*) yet perhaps may be set somtimes to import a cowardly trembling feare; and so may have an influence on the word in some Authors. Thus the Etymologist, δεισιδαίμων, ὑλαβὴς καὶ δειλὸς περὶ θεὰς, the superstitious man is religious and cowardly, *Feares the Gods, and is afraid of them*; and *Clemens* ἡ γὰρ δεισιδαιμονία πάθος, φόβος δαιμόνων ὅσα, *Superstition is a passion, being a feare*

§ 13.

of

*of the Dæmons*; and *Theophrastus* δειλία πρὸς τὸ δαιμόνιόν ἐστι *'tis a cowardly feare of the Dæmon*. Thus *Maximus Tyrius* having compared a *pious man* to a *freind*, a superstitious to a flatterer, [ὁ μὲν εὐσεβὴς φίλος θεῷ, ὅδε δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ θεοῦ] he explaines the meaning in the words following, *the pious man comes to God* ἄνευ δέους *without feare*, the superstitious μέτα πολλοῦ δέους *with much feare*, δυσελπίς, καὶ δεδιὼς τοὺς θεοὺς ὥσπερ τοὺς τυράννους, &c. *dreading* the Gods as so many Tyrants. according to which notion of the Greeke word, Saint *Austin* is affirmed to say, *Deum a religioso vereri, a superstitioso timeri. The Religious man reveres God. the superstitious is afraid of him*; and consequently to that, *Religio Deum colit, superstitio violat. Religion is the worshiping of God, Superstition the wronging and violation of him.* So againe *Plutarch.* ἐκ οἴεται ὁ ἄθεος θεοὺς εἶναι, ὁ δεδεισιδαίμων οὐ βούλεται. *The Atheist thinks there are no Gods, but the superstitious wishes there were none, but in spight of his Teeth beleeves that there are. An argument whereof is, that he is unwilling to dye.* Where the beleeving of any punishment after this life is the maine peice of *Superstition*.

*Char. cap.* δεισιδ: διαλεξ:

*In Alex.*

§. 14.

I conceive my selfe able to give the reader some light in this matter, by what I have gathered out of some scattered λείψανα of *Epicurus's* Philosophy, and it is this: *Epicurus*, we know, was willing to rid God of the trouble of a providence or care of humane affaires, resolved that all things were done *naturalibus ponderibus, & motibus, by naturall weights and motions*, and consequently that men were to *revere and adore God for his greatnesse, and excellency, and beatitude, and immortality, and transcendent beauty; but not to feare, or dread, or be affraid of him.* Of those therefore that differed from him in judgement, as they which thought there was no God at all, were the downe-right ἄθεοι, and for that by him censured; so those that beleived a *providence*, and consequent to that, *rewards* and *punishments*, he rejected also, as the other extreme, under the title of δεισιδαίμονες, or *Superstitious*, or fearers of a deity. This appeares by severall passages in *Cicero* and other of the ancients out of him, and by what we finde in the lives of the *Epicureans* in *Laërtius*. In *Cicero l. 2. de nat. de. ut Superstitione*

*Cic. l. 2. Academ. Quæst. Sic ille deum opere magno liberat, & me timore; Quis enim potest, cum existimet a Deo se curari non & numen divinum horrere? &c. Cic. Ib. Intelligitur a beatâ immortalique naturâ & iram & gratiam segregari quibus remotis nullos a superis impendere metus. Cic. l. 1. de nat. de.*

*perſtitione liberarem*, &c. *to be freed from Superſtition*, is explicated by *metum omnem Deorum pulſum eſſe, to have all feare of the Gods baniſhed from us.* And againe having deſcribed the wiſeman to be ſuch as can *ſine metu vivere, live without feare*, he repeates it againe in theſe other words, *Omnium rerum naturâ cognitâ levamur Superſtitione, liberamur mortis metu, the knowledge of the nature of all things* (and among them of God himſelfe) *frees men and releaſes them from Superſtition and the feare of death.* This in the ſame booke he calls *metum religionis, feare of Religion*, or ſuch a feare as the beleiving Gods providence was apt to beget in men, (eſpecially in thoſe which did what they ought not) *viz.* terrors and expectations of evill from God, which they which tooke it to be an errour in divinity (as *Epicurus* did,) muſt needes count a very uneaſie, unpleaſant errour, and ſo as much diſlike Superſtition, *i. e.* a religion that brings ſo much affliction to their lives, as any man now adayes doth under the moſt odious notion of it.

L. *de fin:*

*Impoſuiſtis in cervicibus noſtris ſempiternum Dominum quem dies & noctes timeremus. Quis enim non timeat omnia providentem, curioſum & plenum negotij Deum? Hinc ἐμμαρμένη, Hinc μαγικὴ quâ tanquam imbuamur eremur ſuperſtitione, ſi vos audire vellemus aut, &c. His terroribus ab Epicuro ſoluti non metuimus eos, quos intelligimus nec ſibi fingere ullam moleſtiam, nec alteri quærere &c. Cic l. 1. de Nat. De:*

§. 15.

§. 16.

Agreeable to this is that of *Ariſtippus* and the *Cyrenaici* in *Laërtius*, which upon the ſame principles reſolve that it is the part of a wiſeman *neither to be moved with envy, nor to be ſuperſtitious*, and afterwards explained the [δεισιδαιμονίας ἐκτὸς ὑπάρχειν] *being without Superſtition* by τὸν περὶ θανάτου φόβον ἐκφεύγειν, *putting off all feare of death*, and as a foundation or conſequent of that feareleſſeneſſe, a reſolution that *nothing is by nature juſt or unjuſt, but only* νόμῳ καὶ ἔθει, *by poſitive law or cuſtome*, and from thence *never doing any* (ἄτοπον) *unbecoming thing*, never admitting any unfaſhionable peice of *Piety* on contemplation of any Mulct or danger.

Whereupon it is, that *Lucretius* an *Epicurean* Philoſopher ſpeaking of the eternity of Torments threatned in another world, confeſſeth that, if that were true, there would be no way of *reſiſting the religions and threats of the Divines. Nam ſi nullum finem eſſe putarent Ærumnarum homines, nullâ ratione valerent Religionibus atque minis obſiſtere vatum.* Making that *beleife of the infinite Torments in another life*, and the *menaces of the Preiſts* attending it, to be the *Religion* or *Superſtition*, that was to be confuted and baniſht out of the world.

And

And I wish 'twere now uncharitable to suspect, (what the actions of many makes too visible) that the abhorring of Superstition (which men we boast of, and by which they so discriminate themselves from other men) hath at least brought them to this piece of Epicurean faith, To discarde all feare of another life as a relicke of superstition, & to resolve with him in *Plutarch*, Δεινὸν ἀπιστία πρὸς τὰ θεῖα, ἡ κατα φρόνησις αὐτῶν, δεινὴ δ' αὖ δεισιδαιμονία. *Unbeleife and contempt of all that is Divine is a shrewd fault indeed but on the other side Superstition is a shrewd fault too*, the shrewder of the twaine, and meant by *superstition* what you had even now from the same Author, The *feare of death*, or *any ill thing* after it. But this by the way.

This generally is the notion of δεισιδαιμονία, Superstition. § 17.
(and the same of Religion too) among the Antient heathen writers when either *Epicureans* or *Atheists* speake of any *Religion*, or those who are neither speake of *some kinde of Religion* which they do *not like*. For in both these cases whatsoever they see men of other persuasions doe, which they like not, or thinke them not bound to, they call it straight their *Superstition* or *Religion*.

Thus in *Plutarch's* Tract περὶ δεισιδαιμονίας, it goes indefinitely for *Religion*, but particularly for some *fearefull apprehensions of the Gods*, which he makes to be contrary to *Atheisme*, and to offend as ill in the other extreame; *a being awed with some frightfull Doctrines to do some things which* he thought not men obliged to, *an Astonishment of soule*, looking on the Gods as so many δείματα, *furies* or *sprights*, conceiving them to be *cruell, bloudy minded, and other such things, which rather then he would beleive*, he professeth he would wish there had beene never a man in the world, μηδ' εἶναι Πλουτάρχον, and that *Plutarch* himselfe had no being. All which are but odious expressions fastened on those practises of Religion which he did not approve of, and the very same that *Epicurus* before him had laid upon Religion or beleife of Providence. § 18.

Among these he mentions keeping of *Sabbaths, and casting on the face, or Prostrations*, particularly that so strict observation of the Sabbath among the Jewes, that when they were In- § 19.

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vaded by the Enemy they would not rise from their seates δεισιδαιμονίᾳ ὡς σαγήνῃ συνδεδημένοι, *tyed and bound by their Religion or Superstition as with a Net*, that they could not move. And then adds the killing and sacrificing of children which by the description one would thinke referred to the custome in the valley of *Hinnom*, or *Tophet* mentioned in the scripture.

§ 20. And so have we passed through the second part of our designed course or method to finde out the meaning of the word.

§ 21. From whence it appeares that the word in Greeke and Latine both in the classicall Authors and the scripture use is set to signifie one or more of these severalls.

§ 22. In generall *Religion* or worship of God without any censure or marke set upon it of true or false; agreeable to which is that of the old Greeke and Latine Lexicon found at the end of some of *Cyrills* workes Δεισιδαιμονία, *Superstitio*, *Religio*, rendring it, indifferently by those two words. And what *Stephanus* observes of *Cicero* that he renders δεισιδαιμονία *Religio*, and that in *Athenaeus* δεισιδαιμονίᾳ περιέχεσθαι is *religione teneri*, (and thereupon *Budaeus*, hath so rendred it) and an ancient glossary, δεισιδαίμων, θεοσεβής. To which purpose a considerable place there is in *Polybius* a grave and an excellent heathen writer who speaking of the Romans *l. 16.p.497.* and giving his opinion of their government that it excelled other commonwealths extremely ἐν τῇ περὶ θεῶν διαλήψει in the opinion and apprehension they had of the Gods, expresses what it was, he so commends in them, λέγω δὲ δεισιδαιμονίαν, I meane saith he, their Superstition, which ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐκτετραγώδηται, was raised so tragically, or to so high a pitch, καὶ παρεισῆκται &c. was so farre taken in both to their private and publique affaires ὥστε μὴ καταλιπεῖν ὑπερβολήν that it was no lesse then an excesse. Where although (that I disguise not any part of his words) it be by him affirmed, that this was παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις ὀνειδιζόμενον, made matter of reproach to the Romans among other men, as indeed every thing in Religion is spoken ill of by those who are of other perswasions and practises) yet 1 that which those others are said to reproach in the Romans is their ὑπερβολή or excesse,

or

or that which others counted to be so, and not δεισιδαιμονία it selfe, and secondly *Polybius* himselfe doth not only commend and extoll extremely (μεγίστην διαφορὰν ἔχειν μοὶ δοκεῖ πρὸς τὸ βέλτιον) both the δεισιδαιμονία and the excesse of it, but attributes much of the good government of that nation to it, and that it doth συνέχειν τὰ Ῥωμαίων πράγματα, keepe their affaires in good order and compasse. If any doubt be made of this importance of this place, I shall then, instead of farther asserting it, adde one other to it which seemes to beyond all exception to demonstrate the word to be used in a good sence, it is in *Diodorus Siculus bibl. l. 5. p. 305.* Where speaking of the ancient soules he taketh notice of one speciall thing in them in their behaviour toward the temples of the Gods, Their lies (saith he in their Temples) a great deale of gold consecrated to the Gods, which yet no one of the natives toucheth διὰ τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν through their superstition or Reverence they beare their Gods, καίπερ ὄντων τῶν Κελτῶν φιλαργύρων καθ' ὑπερβολήν although these countrymen are extremely covetous. Which words must needes set a good notion on δεισιδαιμονία to any that do not count sacriledge a good quality, and abstaining from that a vice or scrupulosity. The onely thing I can foresee possible to be objected to it is, that the not touching of the gold may be such a scrupulosity, but that will be soone answered by puting the reader in minde that ἅπτεσθαι to touch signifies to take away, and that it doth so in this place appeares by the addition of the mention of their covetousnesse which surely would not put them upon the desire of touching only, but also of taking it away.

Secondly the *worship of the deified dead men* and Angels which the Heathens tooke to be true Gods, but the Christians do not, and therefore saith the *Etymologist*, ἰσέον ὅτι σεβάζεσθαι μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησι ἐπὶ καλοῦ λαμβάνεται, παρὰ δὲ ἡμῖν τοῖς χριστιανοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς ἀσεβείας λέγεται. *The word among the Heathens is taken for a good thing, but among Christians for impiety.* § 23.

Thirdly, any part *of Divine worship*, which in obedience to his God, or for feare of vengeance from him, any worshiper doth performe to him. A thing which every sect or sort of people liking in themselves, but disliking in others of a distant § 24.

worſhip, do either honour or defame with the Title (as of Superſtition, ſo) of Religion alſo.

§ 25. Fourthly, *A trembling* feare of Gods puniſhment due for every ſinne, which the *Epicureans* were willing to ſcoffe out of the world, leſt every man being a ſinner, every man ſhould be left to terrors and aſtoniſhments of Conſcience, and ſo looſe that γαλήνη τοῦ βίου, that tranquillity and eaſe of life, which they propoſed to themſelves as the cheifeſt good.

§ 26. To which I need only adde a fifth not yet toutcht upon, *The uſe of magicall Spells, Ligatures, Characters*, &c. (of auſpicious and ominous dayes the not obſerving of which *Heſiod* makes to be impiety, ὄλβιος ὃς τά δὲ πάντα (that whole booke being a direction to that purpoſe) εἰδὼς ἐργάζηται, ἀναίτιος ἀθανάτοισιν, Ὄρνιθας κρίνων, καὶ ὑπερβασίας ἀλεείνων) & all the obſervations and bookes of the *Augures* and *Aruſpices*, a Catalogue of all which *Clemens Alexan*: (*Strom.* 3. *p.* 312.) tells us, was to be ſeene in a Comedy of *Mananders* called δεισιδαίμων, in which he ſcoffes at thoſe that make every Accident almoſt σημεῖον τινός a preſage, or *ſigne of ſomething*, divining by the flight of birds (δεξιὸς ὄρνις Ἄιετος ὑψιπετής, in *Homer*,) by the feeding of chickens, as in that famous ſtory of *Valens* which coſt ſo many men their lives for having names which began with thoſe letters which the chicken peckt at on the table: to which you may adde the Ραβδομαντεία by ſtriking a ſtaffe againſt the ground; to which tis thought the Prophet referred, *Hoſ.* 4. 12. and Κλειδομαντεία, and a many more collected by learned men out of their bookes, and the reſt of the ἐναίσιμα σήματα auſpicious ſignes, ſuch as ἀστράπτειν ἐπιδέξια, lightning on the right ſide in *Homer Id.* β. The like with more eaſe you ſhall finde in Saint *Auſtin de Doctr. Chriſtiana l.* 2. under the Title of *Significationes ſuperſtitioſæ, ſuperſtitious ſignifications*, which ſaith he *Epiſt.* 73. *ad ſerviendum Dæmonibus adhibentur, are uſed to ſerve the Devils*, and thence it ſeemes are called *Superſtitious*, and they that uſe them δεισιδαιμονοῦντες ἐπὶ τοῖς σημείοις *in Suidas, ſuperſtitious obſervers of ſignes.*

Ἡμέρ.

§ 27. All which being thus premiſed, three things there are in our moderne cuſtomary uſe of this word among men, that

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will appeare very inconsequent and improper at least. First that *Superstition* simply and abstractly taken should be resolved in all Authors to signifie somewhat which is *evill*; That sinne particularly of *False-worship*. Whereas first those that use the word to expresse their owne worship either of *God* or *Angels*, or *Saints*, conceive that to be a creditable word, or else would not call it by that name, and the *Etymologists* even now affirmed that among the heathen ἐπὶ καλῷ λέγεται *'Tis taken for a good thing*, and for religion in generall. And secondly When Saint *Pauls* Religion, or Christianity it selfe is called by that name by *Festus* an heathen *Acts* 25. 19. it appeares not that he did use that word as an accusation, or in an ill sence, but only in generall to signifie *Pauls Religion*, or somewhat in that different from the Religion of the *Jewes*, and no whit lesse favoured by him then the *Jewes* Religion. For he that reades the story, shall see that he rather favoured Saint *Paul's* part against the *Jewes*, or at most doubted whose side to judge on, so farre is he from prejudgeing Saint *Paul's* cause, or his Religion in comparison of theirs, or expressing that by this word. Thirdly Saint *Paul* himselfe *Act.* 17. 23. saith, they do ἐυσεβεῖν worship the true God, though ignorantly, taking him for a δαίμων, as the rest of their many Gods were) whom he had called δεισιδαιμονεστέρους. Fourthly he calls them δεισιδαιμονεστέρους, *more religious* then other men, not in relation to any vitious rite or performance, wherein they exceeded others, but in relation to their worshiping the *unknowne God*, which others worshipt not, which saith he was the true God of heaven whom he preached, though the truth is they knew him not. § 28.

A second inconsequence is, that the use of Ceremonies or Rites in the worship of the true God, if they be not distinctly prescribed either by the example or precept of Christ, should be called superstition, then without farther matter of accusation be condemned only for deserving that Title. Whereas first there is no example in the Scripture, nor ancient Authour nor ground in the nature of either Greeke or Latine word to affix that Title to that matter (*Superstition to unprescribed Rites*) or if there were, yet secondly no Authority to defame

that Title, being ſo applyed; or to conclude every thing evill that were called by it, unleſſe it might appeare to be in it ſelfe evill, *abſtracted* from the *Odium* of that Title.

§ 29. The Third Inconſequent thing is, that men on pretence & in the name of Piety ſhould abſtaine from ſome obſervances (in themſelves and their owne nature acknowledged to be *indifferent*) as *ſuperſtitious*, either becauſe they are commanded by lawfull authority, or at moſt, becauſe they are or have been *uſed* by *Papiſts*; And yet themſelves not expect to be accompted *ſuperſtitious* in hating and deteſting and not daring to practice any one of them (and that ſometimes for no other crime but becauſe they are by lawfull *authority commanded* to practice them) but as ſtrictly obligeing themſelves to do the contrary ſometimes that which *Anabaptiſts*, and other Perſons (1 not in authority, ſecondly as much or as well condemned by our Church both for doctrine and manner of worſhip as the Papiſts) are wont to doe; Whereas in things indifferent, firſt it is certainely as criminons, and *Superſtitious* to place piety in the *Negative*, as the *affirmative*, in *not* kneeling, as in *kneeling*; in *abſteining* ſcrupulouſly from Ceremonies, as in *uſing* them as ſcrupulouſly, And ſecondly 'tis as dangerous a kinde of *dogmatizing* to teach the neceſſity of abſtinence from lawfull unprohibited *Ceremonies*, as from lawfull unprohibited *meates*, *Col.* 2. And thirdly it is not imaginable that the intervening of a command on one ſide and not on the other, ſhould leave the *Superſtition* only on that ſide, where the command lies, for then the *Superſtition* muſt conſiſt in obeying lawfull magiſtrates, or elſe the magiſtrates themſelves be the only Superſtitious Perſons in commanding. Either of which acts (either of giving or obeying commands in things indifferent) if it were acknowledged a fault, might ſure be *Adultery*, or *Witchcraft*, as well as *Superſtition*.

§ 30. If to all which hath beene ſaid in this matter, it be ſtill objected, that *ſuperſtition* may and doth in ſome authenticke writers either ſacred or profane ſignifie a *nimiety or exceſſe in Religion*, I ſhall breifely make this returne.

§ 31. 1. That the word *Superſtitious* may indeed denote ſuch exceſſe

ceſſe from the force of the termination [*oſus*] and ſo alſo (ſaith *Agellius* out of *Nigidius Figulus*) the word *Religioſus* denotes; but then, firſt, by that Grammaticall obſervation I might conclude, that *Superſtitio* denotes this no more then *Religio* doth; Nay ſecondly, that 'tis *Agellius* his animadverſion upon *Nigidium Figulus*, that all ſuch exceſſes are not culpable, nor conſequently all words of that termination to be taken in ill ſences.

§ 32. But then Secondly, granting the word to be thus uſed by ſome Authors, I muſt firſt ſay, That ſome, and thoſe not of the meaneſt of the ancient Heathens (as appeares by what we produced out of *Cicero*) did it on that ground of Epicurean Divinity, Gods no providence, no puniſhments in another life, to which it was but conſonant to condemn all ſuperſtition (becauſe all feare of God) for a Nimiety in opinion firſt, and then in practice. 2^ly. that for other later chriſtian writers the uſe of a word in this or that ſence in ſome Authors, is ſo ſlight and caſuall a thing, that it muſt not be thought ſufficient to faſten an ill character on any thing, to which thoſe Authors have applyed it, unleſſe that thing be firſt proved to be ill by ſome other Topick. Thirdly, that thoſe Authors which come home to the point in hand, are ſo few or ſo moderne & of ſo ſmall authority, that they would ſcarce be worth producing. Fourthly, that this ſuppoſed Nimiety or exceſſe in matters of Religion may be reduced to theſe two ſorts, as conſiſting either in the *degree*, or in the number of Actions; either in the *quality* or *quantity*; in the *intenſion* or *extenſion*.

§ 33. If it be ſuppoſed in the firſt kinde onely, then I ſhall without ſcruple deny, that there is any ſuch thing as Nimiety or exceſſe in Religion. There is no poſſibility of being Religious in too high a *Degree*, of praying *too fervently*, or *too often*. For though the *Meſſalians* or *Euchita* were condemn'd in this matter, yet 'tis cleare, that that which was their crime, was not that exceſſive *practice*, but the *laying* that *obligation* upon themſelves and all others, to be allwayes a praying, upon authority of that Text [*Pray continually*] which being by the Apoſtle delivered in reference and in analogie to the *continuall i. e.* dayly *Sacrifices*, was by them miſinterpreted and applyed to *uninterrupted*, *inceſſant* powring out of Prayers. And againe though

though 'tis possible also, that in too frequent or intense a practice of holy Duties some incident fault there may be, as for example, if by so doing a man neglect the Duties of *Charity* or of his owne *particular calling*, yet then also 'tis cleare that this fault is the neglecting of those *Duties*, and not the *Excesse* of Devotion (to which this neglect is but extrinsecall and accidentall, and so not fit to deprave the nature of that devotion it selfe) which you will discerne by this, that if that supposed excesse might be separated from those adherent *Neglects* or *Omissions*, it would then never be accounted criminous, no man that discharges all his other Duties will ever be said to be *too* zealous, or to pray *too* often; and that he doth not discharge those Duties, though a fault it is, and an argument of partiall hypocriticall obedience in him that is wilfully guilty of it, yet sure not properly the sinne of superstition. For 'tis Saint *Austin*'s argument against *Cicero* (who thought that the praying day and night, *ut filii essent Superstites*, was superstition) *de Civi. l. 4. c. 30. Si Superstites dicti, qui diex totas precabantur & immolabant, nunquid non & illi qui instituerunt deorũ simulachra? If 'twere Superstition to pray and sacrifice whole daies together, then sure they were superstitious also that set up those Images of the Gods to which they so Prayed and Sacrificed*, intimating his opinion that the frequency of Prayer could not be Superstitious, unlesse the worship and institution it selfe were Superstitious: that is, the Gods or Images to whom they thus pray'd, false Gods.

§ 34. But if this excesse be supposed to be in the *extension*, *i.e.* the taking in *too* many *things*, to wit too many *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, *&c.* into the service of God, I shall then say. First, that by this it seemes to be granted, that the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* themselves are not *superstitious*, but only the *multitude* of them. I make such hast to assume this as granted, because I conceive it such a reasonable postulation, that I would perswade my selfe no pretender to rationall discourse would deny it me; it being demonstratively as impossible to devest Religion of all Rites and Ceremonies wholly, as to performe the duty of Prayer in a humane body, and yet to doe it at no time, in no place, with no gesture.

§ 35. Or if our opposite Brethren will distinguish betwixt *Circumstances* and *significant Ceremonies*, and onely disclaime the latter;

latter; Then firſt they muſt fall out with their freinds who generally uſe *elevation* of the *hand* in taking of Oathes, and that is a *ſignificant Ceremony*. And ſome of them aſſert the neceſſity of ſitting at the Sacrament as *ſignificative* of their aſſurance of their Familiarity with Chriſt on Earth at his ſecond comming. And ſecondly, they muſt affirme it to be a fault too in a Ceremony, that it is *ſignificative*, which ſeemes very unreaſonable alſo.

For the ſignificancy of a Ceremonie may be of three ſorts. § 26.
*Firſt, when it naturally ſignifies the thing which I am about, and properly floweth from it*; as the lifting up the eyes to Heaven *floweth* from zeale in Prayer, and ſignifies or expreſſeth it; and no ſober man would ever thinke fit to quarrell with that for being *ſignificative*, or to preſcribe limits to the uſe of ſuch kind of Ceremonies. Secondly, *When by the cuſtome of the place it becomes in like manner alſo ſignificative of the Action in hand.* As, among us, *kneeling* ſignifies humility, &c. and to blame ſuch a ſignificancie againe, or ſuch a Ceremonie, becauſe it is *ſignificative*, were as irrationall. 'Twill not be fault in any thus to uſe it privately himſelfe, or being a Magiſtrate to preſcribe others (for decency and uniformity) the uſe of it. Thirdly, when it is ſet to ſignifie ſomething elſe, whether that which it ſignifies be matter of Chriſtian Doctrine; as in the Antient Church, the cuſtome of *ſtanding* in the Church betweene Eaſter and Whitſuntide, was deſign'd to ſignifie the *Reſurrection* of *Chriſt*; or whether it be matter of promiſe, as the Types in the *old law* were of Chriſt to come; or whether matter *of fact* & Story, &c. and then alſo to quarrell with the *ſignificancy* of them, and diſlike them more then if they were empty and *unſignificant*, is Firſt, very irrationall againe (for it will not bee more fault to have ſome profit in them, then to have none.)

Secondly, it will lay a cenſure upon the Types of the Law § 37.
appointed by God himſelfe, for they were ſuch; And though thoſe particulars are now out-dated by the comming of Chriſt whom they ſignified, yet ſince others that are now ſtill ſeaſonable by ſignifying and commemorating ſomewhat *paſt*, or

 prefiguring

prefiguring somwhat yet future, will by that Analogie and proportion which they hold with those which were then lawfull, be evidenced to be lawfull too.

§ 38. The not observing of which matter, and of the sole reason why the old *Jewish Ceremonies, Circumcision, &c.* are interdicted us Christians (not because significative Ceremonies are *toto genere* unlawfull, but because the observing of those particularly which foreshewed Christ, and teaching the *necessity* of observing them, would bee *interpretative* the denying of Christ, or that the *Messias* was come) is (conceive) that which hath given occasion of the mistakes of thinking significative Ceremonies to be now unlawfull; which errour if upon this advertisement it may now be reformed, and this so reasonable a *postulation* for the lawfulnesse of Ceremonies *significative* be thus granted, the greater part of this present Controversie will be at an end; for I shall not then bee Advocate for the multitude or aboundance of that last sort of *significative* Ceremonies, but rather give my full vote to the confirming of the old rule concerning them, that they bee *pauca & salubres, few, & wholsome*; and particularly *few* for these Reasons.

§ 39. First, because there are really not many such wholsome Ceremonies to be found; Secondly, because those that by Lawe are received into the Church, are but very moderate for number; which with me hath no small Authority. Thirdly, because 'tis not impossible that the number may encumber the Soule, by busying it about many things, and so diverting it from the *One great Necessary*. Fourthly, because the multitude of such was counted a Burden to the *Jewes*. Fifthly, because it seemes sometimes to bee an ill symptome of some inward neglect, to spend overmuch Care and Time in the Outer-washings; as in the Pharisees it is noted to have beene; And as *Aristotle* observes of the insectile Animalls, that the want of blood was the cause that they ran out into so many leggs.

§ 40. But then Secondly, I must add by way of caution, that in this matter men are sometimes mistaken (as Misers are in judging

judging of excessive expenses, or sluggards of excessive labour, thinke, they or others exceede, when they doe not.

To which purpose you may please first to take this direction, § 41. that though the premised caution concerning Ceremonies in a Church be very good, that they be *pauca & salubres, few and wholsome*, yet if they be *wholsome*, not only negatively, but positively, not only harmlesse but tending to edification (for so *salubrity*, or wholsomnesse imports) then there will be little reason to accuse them of *excesse*; for if they be *salubrious*, they will then more probably *helpe* the inner devotion, then *encumber it*.

Secondly, you must distinguish of such Acts, wherein that § 42. excesse is supposed to be, that they either are *ordinable, fit, & c. proper* to that end, the service of God, to which they are annex't; and then againe being used in their kinde, they are *salubrious*, and no danger of *excesse*; or Secondly, they are inordinable, unfit, improper, of which nature there are great store noted in the Church of *Rome*; and in this case though any one may be a nimiety, and that nimiety a fault, yet still this not the fault of *Superstition*, but rather of *folly* and *vanity*, or what ever other *guilt*, the using things in the worship of God, which doe no whit tend to that end (but are aliene from it) may amount to. And these *vanities*, or this fault, I desire to alow no favour or patronage or countenance to, but have as full dislikes to them as any charitable man hath, though as yet I am not satisfied, that they are to be called *Superstition*.

And yet concerning a word I shall not contend neither, § 43. but rather grant them lyable to that title also, on condition that I may but evince and be granted this one thing, that it is a circle of injustice, and a noxious fallacy, first to apply the title of Superstition to such trifles or faults as these, then to extend it farther to those things which have no such fault to be charged on them, and then to condemne those also, as faults and crimes, because they are *Superstitious*; just like the old heathen Tyrants dealing with the primitive Christians, first to entertain themselves with the bloody spectacles of bayting of wilde-beasts, then to take off those wilde-beasts skins, and put

them upon Christians, then to bring forth those Christians to be baited and devoured in those shapes. The injustice of which is the ὅπερ ἦν Νῖξαι, the prime thing which this paper was designed to demonstrate.

§ 44. And if still it be urg'd and pressed that *Superstition* is a *Nimiety* and *Excesse* in the use of good Authors, and demand be made wherein, or what is that *Nimiety*, that may properly be called Superstition? I answere, that if we will needes take *Superstition* in that nature, then the most proper matter of it will be.

§ 45. First, The placing more virtue in some things then either naturally, or by the rule of Gods word, or in the æstimation of purer ages of the Church of Christ may be thought to belong to them; as the placing virtue or force *in the signe of the Crosse*, and the womens *parvula Evangelia* in S. *Jerom* on *Mat. Cap.* 23. The *Opus operatum* of the Sacrament, and other Christian performances. (parallel to the περιάμματα or amulets among the Heathen, to the φυλακτήρια the Phylacteries among the *Jewes* (having their *ands Israel Deut.* 5. fastned to their wrists and foreheads) to drive away Devills, and to the *precationculæ* the little Prayers that the *Turke* carries about with him, as a defensative against all dangers. The doing of which is eyther utterly groundlesse, and then it is folly; or else it fastens some promise on Christ which he hath not made in the Gospell, or some doctrine on the antient Church, of which that is not guilty neither, and so is a Nimiety: or else,

§ 46. Secondly, (That to which the literall importance of δεισιδαιμονία referr's) *An excesse of feare*, or δειλία πρὸς τὸν θεὸν, *being afraid of God*, when we neede not, thinking our selves bound (or obligeing others) *as from God*, when God immediatly neither commands nor forbids, nor the lawfull power under which we live (which would be mediatly the command of God also) of this kind is the doing or absteining religiously (*i.e.* upon pretence of divine præcept or prohibition) from those things which the word and the lawe of *Christ* doth neither immediatly, nor by consequence of commanding obedience to the higher powers, command nor interdict us. I say not

not, the ſimple doing and abſtayning (for that may be ſimply lawfull) nor the doing & abſtayning upon ground of command or prohibition from our lawfull ſuperiours, (for if there be any ſuch, we are bound by the word of God to ſuch obedience, and the not paying thereof is as truly, I will add, as immediatly a breach of Gods Lawe and ſinne againſt God, as any act of theft or adultery, or ſinne againſt the ſecond table: for though the commands of the Magiſtrate, are but mediatly the cõmands of God, yet the diſobeying of thoſe commands is an immediat diſobedience to God, in the fifth Commandement which commands to honour, *i.e.* to obey him, and then to be moſt exact and præciſe in caution never to ſinne againſt that obedience, cannot be *ſuperſtition*, or fault, though perhaps by being in a man that makes little Conſcience of greater diſobedience, it be an ill *Symptome* of that *Hypocriſy* which conſiſts in *ſtraining at Gnats and ſwallowing Camels*) but the doing or abſteyning *religiouſly* (which is in effect *dogmatizing Col.* 2. 20. *laying burdens* upon our ſelves, and others as from *Chriſt*) where *Chriſt* hath wholly left us free. As if a private man ſhould thinke himſelfe obliged by (or a Magiſtrate preſſe upon others by virtue of the Moſaicall præcept, the obligation of) the Iewiſh Lawe long ſince abrogated by *Chriſt*, or any other outdated or not-yet-given command; This might be called *Superſtition*, under this Notion of *Nimiety*, becauſe that man add's to the *Commands* of *Chriſt* (as the former to the *Promiſes*) annexed to the Chriſtian Religion, to the Goſpell Rule, thoſe things which belong not to it, and ſo is an exceeder in the *feare* and *ſervice* of God, doth things in obedience to God, which hee neither immediatly nor mediatly commands, and ſo walkes ἀκριβῶς ὡς ἄσοφος *Epheſ.* 5. 15. *Circumſpectly, but as a foole, fearing where no feare is*, doing ſome things ſervilly (that is, fearing damnation if he ſhould not doe them) *wherein Chriſt* hath left him *free*, and no authority of the Church or lawfull Magiſtrate reſtrain'd that Liberty.

And this is a culpable or criminous *Exceſſe*, not in doeing what God commands not (for that may be innocent enough) but in affirming (as a falſe Teacher) God to command when he § 47.

doth not command, or to forbid when hee doth not forbid; and ſo inthralling himſelfe or others, whom God hath freed. Which way of *dogmatizing*, or impoſing as neceſſary ſuch things as the lawe of *Chriſt* hath not made neceſſary (no, nor ſo much as the higher powers authorized by *Chriſt*, nor the Primitive or univerſall Church of *Chriſt*, which will have authority amongſt all ſober men) and ſo proceeding to make ſuch things marks and characters to condemn others and illuſtrate themſelves by, is the ſpeciall kinde of *Superſtition*, which I have reaſon to beleeve any kinde of Proteſtants to be guilty of. Yea and

§ 48. The only one, unleſſe it be that ridiculous one of making groundleſſe obſervations of ominous things, inauſpicious events, unlucky daies, and ſuch like old-wives divinations, to which one part of *Theophraſtus* his character of Superſtition, and of *Agellius* his notion of it, and of S. *Auſtins* alſo referrs; which yet is rather *beleeving* firmly what we have no ground to *beleeve*, and ſo an *exceſſe of credulity*, then *doing* what we are not bound to *do*, & ſo an *exceſſe* of *Religion*; or if you wil, a *civill Superſtition* (being not in any order to the worſhip of God) in an affected retayning or embracing of ſome old Heathen traditions, taken up by the δεισιδαίμονες, firſt fooliſh in them, and then of evill report for us to continue from them, being ſo much better inſtructed then they were; and if taken up upon their authority, and continued under that notion, then alſo poſſibly matter of ſcandall (as the eating of the εἰδωλόθυτα, *Things offered to Idols*, was 1 *Cor.* 10. 29.) But then ſtill this is rather an effect of naturall magick, or Heatheniſh perſwaſions, then an *Exceſſe* of the Chriſtian *Religion*; and not at all the thing which is now a daies preſt with that odious title of *Superſtition*, and therefore it may ſuffice to have named this without farther enlarging on it.

§ 49. As for thoſe other things which are ſo ordinarily branded under this name, by many that are now ill pleaſed with the legall ſtate of things in our Church, though I ſhall not deſcend to the particular conſideration of them, and vindication of each, yet this it will not be unſeaſonable to have advertiſed

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in this place, that that maine proofe and common way of evidencing the *superstitiousnesse* of some observances or performances among us, only because either wee doe place (or others have placed) *holynesse* in them, is, (whatsoever may be said of it in *thesi*) in *hypothesi*, or *application* to the particular cases generally very false, or impertinent.

§ 50. For, whensoever in any such particular I shall be thus accused, I shall first aske what is meant by *holynesse*? any reall inherent virtue? or only (according to the * Hebrew, and so קדש Scripture notation of the word) separation from common uses? For the first of these, that reall *inherent holynesse*, no Protestant that I have heard of, affirmes it of any created *thing*, but only of *persons*, as *God*, in the high degree, and *Saints* of his, in a lower and imperfect degree, by way of communication from him. Either therefore the charge must be false, or else by *holynesse* must be meant that second kinde of it, *separation* to *holy*, from common uses; and thus times, & things, and actions, &c. may be truly called *holy*, and if we place no more of *this holinesse* in them, then thus truly belongs to them, then sure we offend not against, nor are to be defamed (for *Superstition* in so doing.

§ 51. In this case the only thing behinde for inquiry will be, by whom and how farre this thing what ever it is, is thus separated, and that I shall suppose will be found to be done either by *Christ* or the *Apostles*, or the *universall Church* in the purest ages, or the *particular Church* (and rulers thereof) wherein we live; or if by none of these, then (being left free and at our owne disposing) by our owne voluntary act, or that confirmed with a resolution, or vow perhaps in some cases. Now if these or any of these be the authors of the *separating* any thing, then to discerne whether we exceede in any of these, and whether we place more *holynesse* then is due to them, it will not be very difficult: For, if that, which is thus separated by *Christ*, I shall count *holy* in that degree, and conceive my selfe obliged to it *virtute præcepti divini*, *by virtue of divine precept*, I surely offend not. And so in the second, If I count my selfe obliged by the *Apostolick præcept*, or in the third by the example or

*præcept*

*precept of the primitive universall*, or in the fourth, of *the particular Church*, (each of which ought to have their authority with us, though that in different degrees) all this while I offend not, because the *holinesse* which I place in them is still proportioned to the ground of it, the authority of him that thus *separated them*.

§ 52. And so againe, if my *voluntary oblation* I performe as a voluntary oblation, and only expect that God that hath promised to *accept* such, will, if it be as it ought, *accept* this; and in case of *resolution* and *vow*, add that respect in my performance, which is due to such, all this while I am not blameworthy,

§ 53. But if I straine either of these any degree above its ranke, elevate an Ecclesiasticall or humane Constitution into a divine Præcept, &c. then I shall acknowledge this a fault, and that fault perhaps capable of the title of *Superstition*: which yet must not be extended thus farre, that the giving of the like *obedience* to one as the other, is this fault, (for *obedience* being due to both Divine and Humane lawes (keeping their termes of subordination) I am alike bound by *Christ* to *obey* both, and I must not make any difference in that Obedience, but do both *for Conscience sake*) but that the *confounding* the *grounds* or *foundations* of my obedience, which ought to be *distinguished*, is in it selfe an error, and that which may prove of ill importance, by making me *equall* them, when perhaps they come in competition with (and so thwart) one another; in which case the inferiour ought *to give place* to the superiour.

§ 54. If to this it be replyed, that though I doe not elevate this above its pitch, do not thus attribute more *holynesse* to this or that then it deserves, yet *Papists* or other *Superstitious* persons have done so, and therefore the thing is become *Superstitious*, and consequently must be forborne by me also. To this I answere First, That the ill use of any will not corrupt a thing in it selfe either commanded, or but laudable, or only innocent before; and consequently though the Papists be superstitious, yet will not every thing from them be sufficiently proved to be superstitious unlesse it have some other crime beside

their

their using it, for otherwise, not only the *Creede* and *Pater-noster*, but even the *Scripture* it selfe must be superstitious also.

This inconsequence being acknowledged, I ad, Secondly, that there is nothing which can oblige me to abstein fro that which they have used superstitiously, unlesse either the danger that I be thought to doe so too, to be as *Superstitious* as they, or the possibility that others following me in doing it, may follow them in doing it *superstitiously*, and either of these dangers being supposed, will not yet come home to prove it *Superstitious*, (which is the only thing we have now to consider) the most that they can doe, is to make it *scandalous*, and (beside that this belongs to another matter and is abundantly handled in *another Discourse on that Subject*) I shall add one thing more that this consideration of the danger or possibilicy, is not so much a *religious* as a *prudentiall* one (for an act of *prudence* it is to weigh and ponder whether this be a probable danger or no) and so belongs to the higher powers to consider of (not to every private man) who if they thinke fit by lawe to forbid it, I must not then venter on it; if (*non obstante* this appearance of danger) to command it, though 'tis possible they may doe amisse in so doing, yet I (having nothing to doe in that act of theirs, unlesse I am of Counsell advised with in it) may be innocent enough in so obeying, and if they have thought fit neither to command nor forbid, then am I left free in my owne particular, and may doe either, so I doe it with those cautions, that in the *tract of Scandall* are set downe. § 55.

To which if it be replyed, that though this bee true in *these*, yet in *hypothesi* 'twill not be pertinent in this kingdome. The Lawes of this kingdome have taken away all Ceremonies used in the *Roman* Church, save those that are named in those Lawes, and so have left no man any such liberty. I answere, They have taken away the *obliegingnesse*, but not *lawfulnesse* of them, unlesse of those which eyther our Church or some higher principle hath pronounced unlawfull; my meaning is, that whatsoever laudable performance was taken up by the Papists, and by them commanded, now though that § 56.

command be taken away, and so we free from the obliegingneſſe or burthen of it, yet 'tis not therfore made unlawfull or prohibited to us (for that were to reſtraine our liberty alſo, and only to exchange one burthen for another) or if it were, I ſhould then thinke my ſelfe oblieged to abſteine alſo.

§ 57. The Concluſion from all this diſcourſe will be, that if ſome men, as they will abide no *Rites*, ſo they would avow no *quarrels* but what *Scripture* will give them particular directions or commands for, and conſequently if they would not judge or damn their brethren, when neither *Chriſt* and his writ, nor the authority of the primitive univerſall Church, nor the orders of the particular within which they live, nor the *indecency* of the thing it ſelfe (of which yet every *private* man muſt not bee allowed a competent judge) condemns them, it might be hoped that *truth* and *peace* and *juſtice* and *charity* that have taken their joynt flight from this earth together, might together returne to it againe, which till it be done it muſt be ſtill expected that they who have learn't one of the Divels attributes, that of Satan, *Adverſary*, or ἐχθρὸς ἀνὴρ *enemy Man*, will alſo advance to another, that of διάβολος *calumniator*, and κατήγορος ἀδελφῶν *accuſer* (as of the *brethren*, *i.e.* true *beleevers* ſoe) of every chriſtian or innocent action of theirs, and that if there bee no known playne ſinne to be charged on them with any probability, then ſome unknowne, obſcure, miſunderſtood name ſhall ſupply that place, and as once *Herodius* obſerved that there was a Lawe made that no crime ſhould bee capitall but *treaſon*, but then every the leaſt *miſbehaviour*, or even innocent harmleſſe action, in ſuch whom they had a minde to puniſh, was brought in under the title of *Treaſon*; and ſo every thing became capitall by that meanes, ſo now it being by ſome men reſolved (if the teſtimony of the reſt of their lives may be beleeved) that there is no capitall damning ſinne, worth heeding, or abſteining from but *Superſtition*; every *rite* or *geſture* or *motion* in them whom they pleaſe to quarrell with, ſhall be accuſed and arraigned and ſentenced under that title.

§ 58. It were to be wiſh't that the paines that is taken in defaming all *bodily worſhip*, under the *norme* of *Superſtition*,

*stition*, were more profitably employed, either in finding out meanes to encrease our inward attention and fervor in performing that great duty of prayer (to which purpose (I am confident) *fasting*, and *humility* of *bodily gestures*, those two maine branches of the *moderne Superstition*, will not bee found unprofitable) or else in the search of that spirituall *pride* and *uncharitablenesse* and *contention*, that *filthinesse of the Spirit*, which is apt to steale into and defile the best mens hearts, and if it may please, of one reall, *blasting*, *damning*, and yet (as if out-dated) *little considered sinne*, you may take your option, eyther that of ἱεροσυλία *Sacriledge*. *Ro*. 2. 22. or that other of *irreverence* and *prophanenesse*.

*Take heede that no man deceive you with vaine words.*

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# *FINIS.*

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## ERRATA.

PAg 2. lin. 35. read εἰληχώς. p 3. l. 35. r *Rom*. 1. 25. r. 4. in marg. πρωτοτερον τι. etc εδεν, εἶδεν. p. 5. in marg. *Char*. περὶ δεισιδ: διαλεξ: δι. p 5. l. 15. p. 5. l. 15 ὁ δὲ δεισιδαιμ. p 7. l. 3. for, *men we*, r. *many so*. p 9 l. 3. διαφοράν. l. 9. r. *tome beyond*. l. 11. for, *soules* r. *Gaules*. l. 13. r. *There lies (saith he) in their Temples a*. l. 22. r. *not touching*. p. 12. l. 37. r *Superstitiosus*. p 15. l. 36. r. *since that others*. p. 21. l. 4 r. *have placed*) p 22. l. 36. for *them* r. *thence*.

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